

December 11, 2009

WASHINGTON, DC - Today, U.S. Rep. Michael Arcuri (NY-24) voted in support of the Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (H.R. 4173). The bill will end taxpayer-funded bailouts and prevent financial institutions from becoming 'too big to fail,' protect consumers from unfair and deceptive business practices, safeguard investments and savings, and inject transparency and accountability into our broken financial system.

"Wall Street banks were allowed to put short-term profits ahead of long-term stability under the Bush Administration and reaped record profits as a result of their risky and out-of-control behavior. When the markets collapsed out from under them, this country's hardworking citizens were forced to suffer the consequences," **Arcuri said**. "This bill strengthens enforcement and makes necessary reforms to hold Wall Street accountable so it can never again recklessly gamble with our financial health and safety."

H.R. 4173 contains a number of comprehensive measures which are designed to make consumer protection a federal priority and prevent a future collapse of our financial markets. The bill creates a new Consumer Financial Protection Agency (CFPA) to prevent borrowers from taking out loans they can't afford and holding risky lenders liable for their practices. The CFPA will also protect families and small businesses from irresponsible lending practices by ensuring that bank loans, mortgages, and credit cards are fair and easy to understand. For the first time, one agency will have sole focus and responsibility for monitoring and enforcing federal consumer protection laws.

The bill also strengthens government oversight over large banks and financial firms, and includes tougher, stricter regulation of credit rating agencies, hedge funds, and derivatives speculators that were directly responsible for last year's financial collapse. It also addresses egregious executive compensation by allowing shareholders to have a 'say on pay,' requiring independent directors to serve on compensation committees, and limiting rewards for risky behavior. The legislation requires large, risky investment banks and financial institutions to pay into an emergency fund that would be used to prevent any future event similar to last year's economic crisis. The creation of this emergency fund will permanently eliminate the possibility of taxpayer funds being used to secure the financial markets.

H.R. 4173 passed the House of Representatives today by a vote of 223-202.

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